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ABSTRACT

In U.S. middle school social studies and history classrooms the prevalent modes of instruction continue to be the traditional large group, teacher dominated and controlled recitation and lecture based primarily on the textbook. Many researchers, however, criticize the reliance on textbook-based teaching in classrooms, since they consider social studies and history textbooks to be biased, superficial, or poorly written, presenting history from a single perspective with few conflicting ideas. Analysis of middle school students' study of World War II--their receptiveness to and acquisition of multiple perspectives--was undertaken in a qualitative study conducted during a 3-week period in a middle school in northeast Georgia. Seven sixth grade case study students were selected by their teacher from two social studies classes. Two oral history narrators, one U.S. and one Japanese World War II veteran, visited the classroom during the unit of study. Three principal data sources were used: interviews with the teacher and the seven students, classroom observations and participation, and students' written assignments. Through a comparative textbook analysis activity and the teacher's instruction about the atomic bombing, three students' knowledge and perspectives advanced. All students' knowledge about World War II dramatically advanced after the oral history activity. The teacher also played an important role in helping students advance their knowledge and construct their perspectives. The study furthered the understanding of students' historical understanding, historical inquiry, perspective taking, and cross-cultural understanding between Japan and the United States. Contains 85 references. (BT)

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Building multiple historical perspectives: An investigation of how middle school students are influenced by different perspectives

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Debates over history education have become increasingly contentious in many countries (Foster, 1998; Nash, Crabtree, & Dunn, 1994; Stearns, Seixas, & Wineburg, 2000) because school history has been historically regarded as the primary place in the school curriculum for students to cultivate a sense of national identity, common values, and heritage.

In the United States, academic and public debate has focused on school history curriculum (e.g., Apple, 1993; Banks, 1995; Bloom, 1987; Cheney, 1995; Gitlin, 1995; Levine, 1996; McLaren, 1997; Nash et al., 1997; Schlesinger, 1992; Sleeter, 1995; Sleeter & McLaren, 1991; Wills, 2000). Since the United States houses the most diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic school population in the world, several important questions surrounding school history have endured (Foster, 1999a): Whose history gets told? How should the experiences of various ethnic groups be portrayed? Does a common American identity exist? And, if it does, how should this "shared" national identity and experience be presented in history classrooms?

In American middle school social studies and history classrooms, the prevalent modes of instruction continue to be traditional large-group, teacher-dominated, and teacher-controlled recitation and lecture based primarily on the textbook (Allen & Stevens, 1998). Many researchers, however, criticize the reliance on textbooks and textbook-based teaching in classrooms. For example, they argue that social studies and history textbooks are biased, superficial, or poorly written and present history from a single perspective with few conflicting ideas (Tunnel & Ammon, 1996; Wade, 1993). Gagnon (1988) states that textbooks do not assist students in obtaining the "judgement,

perspectives, and knowledge of human and society that are important to the study of society.

As knowledge about students' construction of meaning has emerged in recent years (Vygotsky, 1978; Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Educators and researchers have a greater understanding of students' construction of historical thought, meaning, and perspective (e.g., Foster, Hoge, & Rosch, 1999; Seixas, 1994; VanSledright & Brophy, 1992). Many educators and history education researchers suggest the use of various alternative methods other than textbook-based teaching of history in elementary and middle schools in order to provide students with additional interpretive and analytical opportunities (e.g., Epstein, 1994; Field, Labbo, Wilhelm, & Garrett, 1996; Foster et al., 1999; Hoge & Crump, 1988; Jorgenson, 1993; Labbo & Field, 1995; Levstik & Barton, 1996; Martinello & Cook, 1994; Wolf, Balick, & Craven, 1997). Additionally, Sleeter and Grant (1999) state that "Diverse materials should be used to present diverse viewpoints. Students should become comfortable with the fact that often there is more than one perspective, and rather than believing only one version, they should learn to expect and seek out multiple versions" (p. 167).

The National Center for History in the Schools (1994) supported important educational reform in U.S. schools in its suggested national history standards (Doppen & Yeager, 1999; Nash et al, 1998). The NCHS standards identified the ability to describe the past "through the eyes and experience of those who were there" as an essential component of historical comprehension (NCHS, 1994, p. 23). To adequately develop this ability, students and teachers must go beyond textbooks (NCHS, 1994) because, as Levstik (1986) points out, textbook-based teaching and learning practices are largely unsuccessful in developing students' historical understanding and perspectives. Many textbook narratives provide scant attention to perspective or empathy because they simply tell sets of historical facts. The NCHS standards emphasized that the use of diverse methods and materials helps to account for students' feelings, emotions, and perspectives of the people who were involved in historical events.

Studying perspective-taking and empathy has in the last decades gained prominence among social studies and history education researchers (e.g., Ashby & Lee, 1987; Barton, 1996; Boddington, 1980; Dickinson & Lee, 1984; Downey, 1995; Foster,

1999; Foster & Yeager, 1998; Knight, 1989; Levstik & Barton, 1997; Portal, 1987; Seixas, 1996; Shemilt, 1984). Ashby and Lee (1989) found, through their Chata project, that children require many opportunities to gain historical understanding. Davis, Yeager, and Foster (in press) report that educational researchers and practitioners interpret and teach about perspective-taking and empathy in a variety of ways.

Analysis of middle school students' study of World War II -- their receptiveness to and acquisition of multiple perspectives -- is special interest. Four research questions directed this study: (1) What do students know about World War II prior to a unit of study on World War II?; (2) What do students know about World War II after reading their U.S. textbooks and participating in typical classroom activities?; (3) What happens to students' perspective-taking skills as they engage in various activities such as comparative textbook analysis and an oral history activity related to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as an addition to the unit of study about World War II? ; and (4) What perspectives do students share with other middle school students during their end-of-unit presentations?

There are several reasons why the topic of World War II was selected for this study. First, some significant studies of historical perspective-taking and empathy focus on various topics and events during the war, such as British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain (Foster, 1999b), the Holocaust (Riley, in press), and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Doppen, 2000; Yeager, Foster, Maley, Anderson, & Morris, 1997, 1998; Yeager & Doppen, in press). Second, the topic of World War II is conducive of an examination of multiple perspectives. For example, little consensus exists on the rationale for the atomic bombing or the subsequent effects, implications, and results of the employment of such weaponry, not only between Japan and the United States, but also among historians (Bohan & Davis, 1998). Thus, students can learn about varying perspectives and divergent interpretations of an event and also can learn about the differences between supportable and insupportable claims (Levstik, 1997). Third, the topic has enormous relevance to contemporary issues including the justifiable and moral use of force, the presence of nuclear weapons, and concerns for the environment (Foster & Morris, 1994). Finally, I selected the topic because of my interest in the various perspectives surrounding World War II and the methods and materials used to read about

it in the United States and in Japan. In a prior study, I found that the treatment of Japan's post-World War II events in the major history textbooks in use in the United States and Japan differs greatly (Ogawa, 1998, 1999)

Methodology

Research site

The study was conducted during a period of three weeks surrounding Memorial Day in 2000. The site of this study was Greenfield County Middle School (All names of places and people used in this study are pseudonyms), public middle school located in Greenfield County in northeast Georgia. The student population of Greenfield County Middle School represents a wide variety of backgrounds, educational levels, and economic conditions. At the time of this study, Greenfield County Middle School had an enrollment of approximately 530 students: 72 % of the students were Euro-Americans, 27% were African-Americans, and 1% were Hispanic. Asian students were not enrolled, and the school did not have a program of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

Ms. Judy Williams

Judy is a white female social studies and mathematics teacher who, at the time of the study, had seven years teaching experience: one year in high school and six years in middle school. She has a master's degree in middle school education and mathematics education from a local university. At the time of the study, she taught both social studies and mathematics classes.

My preliminary interview with Judy indicated that she might be characterized as a "storyteller" among Evans' five types of social studies and history teachers (Evans, 1989). Evans (1989) explained that "Storytellers emphasize fascinating details about people and events and suggest that knowledge of other times, people, and places is the most important rationale for studying history" (p. 215). In her interview, she emphasized that teaching about people in the past should be the center of how teachers teach history. Asked about students' learning about history, she was concerned about the influences of movies and video games on students' learning. She understood that movies and video games might promote students' interest in history and provide knowledge about historical events. However, she also had negative ideas about movies and video games. In her

opinion, they do not provide accurate information and do not give multiple perspectives about history.

Seven case study students

Judy's social studies classes of 44 sixth grade students reflected the racial makeup of the community and the school. One class (Class I) had 22 students: 11 boys (9 Whites and 2 African-Americans) and 11 girls (5 Whites and 6 African-Americans). The second class (Class II) had 22 students: 13 boys (10 Whites and 3 African-Americans) and 9 girls (7 Whites and 2 African-Americans).

She described the students in her two social studies classrooms as including a wide range of academic abilities. She considered Class I to be average or above average academically. She considered Class II to contain a wider range of students, including several who had serious problems with reading and writing, several special education students, and several students with a high level of both ability and achievement. She thought that the enthusiasm, motivation, and interest of most students were high.

She selected seven case study students from these two social studies classes for subsequent interviews by the researcher. Before Judy selected the case study students, I determined criteria that the case study students should represent sex, diverse cultural backgrounds, and different academic levels. She selected 4 boys (3 Whites and 1 African-American) and 3 girls (2 Whites and 1 African-American). These seven students represented different academic performance levels: 2 high average, 4 average, and 1 low.

Oral history narrators

Two oral history narrators, an American and a Japanese World War II veteran, visited the classroom during the unit of study. The American veteran, Mr. Martin, was chosen from the community and volunteered to speak about his experience during World War II and his perspective of the war. Mr. Martin went to the European Theater and he was assigned to a battleship during the war. The Japanese veteran, Mr. Yamada, who can speak English, volunteered to speak about his experience during the war and his perspective of the war. Mr. Yamada was assigned to a tank during the war. His brother was injured due to the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Even though I invited him to speak, I had not asked his experience during World War II and his perspective about the war and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to avoid

placing any influence on my perspective and knowledge. The selection of Mr. Yamada was convenient based upon my individual relationship with him.

Research design

I selected a qualitative case study for this study for three reasons. The most important reason I used a case study is that it plays an important role in advancing a field's knowledge base (in this case, historical inquiry, perspective-taking, and teaching and learning of history). The nature of case study makes it an appealing design for an applied field of study such as education. My study has the potential to affect and perhaps even improve teaching practice, and some teachers might use the same or similar procedures when they teach history.

Data collection

For my study, I used three principle data sources, allowing for triangulation which enhances validity and reliability in the study: interviews with the classroom teacher and seven case study students, classroom observations and participation, and students' written assignments.

Interviews

In this study, the seven case students were interviewed using semi-structured questions about their knowledge about World War II. Structured questions allow the researcher to compare the responses of students to identify overall patterns. The seven case study students were interviewed four times: prior to the unit of an instruction of World War II, after the typical classroom activities, after the textbook analysis, and after oral history activities. The length of each student's interview was approximately 15 minutes. I chose a quiet location in the school, either the classroom or a conference room in the media center, for interviews so the conversations would not be disturbed. I took written notes in addition to taping students' interviews. In this way, I could record my reactions to the students' statements, to signal the importance of what was being said or to pace the interviews.

I interviewed Judy before and after the unit of instruction about World War II. The interviews, unstructured and conversational in tone, were conducted in her class after the school, so the conversations would not be disturbed. Along with her personal background, these interviews gave me an opportunity to learn about her philosophy of

teaching social studies and history, her thoughts about her students' attitudes to learning history, and her perspective about World War II and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Classroom observation and participation

During classroom observations, I gathered information about the physical environment of the classroom and the learning activities in which the students and the classroom teacher were engaged. Classroom observation provided a way to view both teacher and student roles and interactions. During the first week prior to the unit of World War II, my stance was that of a "participant as observer." However, my stance while collecting information as an observer was that of an "observer as participant." As an observer, I tried to avoid placing any influence on students' perspectives and on their teacher's instruction about the war. When students asked me questions and perspectives about the war and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, I didn't respond to their questions. I just smiled at them or I said, "I don't know." While observing in the classroom, I took field notes and did not say anything unless the teacher asked me.

Field notes are commonly used in observations. During my study, I tried to take field notes about everything that I saw, heard, felt, and even touched. However, it was not an easy task. I initially took fields notes in English. However, I could not express everything quickly and accurately so I started to take notes in my native language, Japanese.

Analysis of written documents

Several data sources were written documents. For this study, I analyzed several examples of student work in the form of student-generated documents: KWL sheets, students' data sheets of textbook analysis, students' short essay about the atomic bombing, students' interview questions for two veterans, transcripts of oral history interviews, and copies of students' work and reflections.

Data analysis

For my study, I used a constant comparison method to analyze data. Since I wanted to know how different interpretations influenced middle school students' perspectives and how their perspectives were changed, advanced, or were disavowed

through various activities, the constant comparative data analysis fit my research design. Data analysis included within-case and cross-case analysis.

For this paper, I focused on three case study students. First, I analyzed data from each student. For each within-case analysis, I used constant comparative methods. Second, I analyzed data across the three case students. For this cross-case analysis, I evaluated common and differing findings across the three case study students.

3-week unit of the instruction about World War II

During the first week of this unit, students learned about World War II by listening to Judy's lectures, taking notes during her lecture, completing activities, and reading their textbook and handouts. Students learned about the European Theater and then the Pacific Theater. Judy taught that World War II was the "bloodiest and most costly war in history" because millions of troops and civilians were killed or injured between 1939 and 1945. During lectures about the European Theater, she used a map to teach which countries were involved in the war, how Hitler gained political power, and how Germany expanded her territories. She also taught about some important events in the European Theater chronologically, such as Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain, Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, the Holocaust, and the end of the war in Europe. About the Pacific Theater, she used a concept map to teach about Japan during the war, illustrating ten topics. These ten topics were: Japan's unique characteristics, Japan's expansion, U.S. pressure on Japan, Pearl Harbor, Japan's early success, the Battle of Midway, the U.S. offensive, Roosevelt's call for Japan's surrender, the Manhattan Project and the atomic bombing, and the outcomes of the war. Judy instructed students to copy the concept map while they listened to her lecture. During the lecture, students asked various questions and made personal comments about Japan during the war.

Next, students engaged in a comparative textbook analysis. Judy instructed students to find textual passages of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from their U.S. textbook (Prentice Hall's *Geography: Tools and Concepts*, 1998) and a translated version from a Japanese textbook (Osaka Shoseki's *Chugaku Shakaika*, 1998). The Prentice Hall text was selected because students used the text in their social studies class and they had used the textbook to learn about World War II as a part of an introductory unit of the geography of North America. The Osaka Shoseki text was

selected because it is widely used in Japanese middle schools. Students completed a data sheet in which they classified similar and different treatments of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in these U.S. and Japanese textbooks. Five key topics for comparison were: (1) Creation of the atomic bomb: "Who made the atomic bomb?" "How was the atomic bomb tested?"; (2) America's motives and objectives in using the bomb: "Why did the United States drop the atomic bomb?"; (3) Soviet role: "What was the Soviet role in the dropping of the atomic bomb?"; (4) Dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki: "How do textbooks in the two countries treat the atomic bomb?"; and (5) Aftermath of the bombing: "How many people died or were injured by the atomic bombing?" These five topics were consistent with those from previous studies concerning this historical event by Fleming (1983), Henry (1996), Kazemek (1994), and Siler (1990).

After completing the comparative textbook analysis activity, students learned details about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by listening to Judy's lecture, listening to the Hiroshima victims' stories, and reading handouts about the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that she had prepared. She taught about varying perspectives and divergent interpretations and also taught about the differences between supportable and insupportable claims. She then introduced two Hiroshima victims' stories that she had cited from a web page of the City of Hiroshima. She selected a story, "Shigeru's Lunch Box," because the victim of the atomic bombing, Shigeru, was a middle school student. Thus, she thought that her students might be interested in the historical event by learning about someone their own age. She selected another story, "Human Shadow on Stone," because she wanted to teach the scale of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and to teach the term "vaporize." After Judy explained the scale of the atomic bombing by giving detailed information, students learned about a hypothetical situation in which they imagined Hiroshima was their community and a Hiroshima-scale bomb had been dropped. Maps of Georgia and their county, based upon diagrams originated by Hood (1998), were provided for reference and were put in the classroom during the unit. Students informally talked with Judy and other classmates about the realities of the devastation. They wondered what parts of their community would be destroyed and how many people would suffer if a 25-megaton bomb, the same scale of

current nuclear weapons, were dropped. At the end of the lecture about the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Judy asked students to write a short essay about the historical event.

Next, students participated in an oral history activity. Judy explained to her students about the oral history activity because her students had never engaged in oral history activities. Judy proceeded by giving a personal example, that of her youngest son's oral history interview project with her 70-year-old father about his experience during the Korean War. She told her students that this wartime story was helpful because she discovered many things about her father through her son's oral history project. Students listened to the story very quietly and with interest and surprise.

Next, students prepared interview questions for the two oral history narrators, Mr. Yamada and Mr. Martin. Judy instructed her students to brainstorm about questions they would like to ask to Mr. Yamada and Mr. Martin individually and questions they would like to ask both. Some students prepared interview questions with classmates, while other students, particularly high ability students and students who were interested in history, prepared questions individually. After Judy collected the students' interview questions, she shared some questions with the students and chose 27 questions for Mr. Yamada and Mr. Martin. Judy typed up these questions for the students to use, making sure to leave enough space under each question for students to make notes during the interviews.

Then, students engaged in a group oral history interview with Mr. Yamada one day and Mr. Martin the following day. There are three reasons Judy used a group oral history interview process. First, her students could use their time well by interviewing the respondents as a group. Second, by guiding the students through the oral history activity, she helped them understand what oral history is (Weineberg, 1996). Third, all students were able to have equal access to both World War II veterans. During the group interviews, Judy distributed the typed list of questions for each respondent, and then the students took turns asking their questions. While listening to responses of the Japanese and American veterans, students took notes and later discussed their perceptions related to the questions and the veterans' answers. Some students asked additional questions of Mr. Yamada, for instance, about Japanese women's roles during the war and other topics

they were interested in such as Japanese martial arts and food. They asked some additional questions of Mr. Martin about the battleship to which he was assigned during the war. Through their oral history activities, students learned firsthand that the story of *history could be told in different ways and from different perspectives.*

After the group oral history interview, Judy asked her students to answer questions related to the Japanese and American veterans' stories. To complete the reflective writing assignment, students reviewed their questionnaire sheets and notes. They reflected on their understandings of the multiple perspectives they had gained from their readings, the lectures, and the interviews.

Finally, students prepared presentations for their classmates about what they had learned during the unit of the study. Students chose various styles of presentations, such as drawings, oral reports, and paper presentations, and they used diverse materials such as photographs, maps, books, web sites, and other primary and secondary sources. Students chose a variety of topics: the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the Holocaust and Jewish concentration camps; the USS Indianapolis; key symbols, such as the Nazi swastika, the Jewish Star of David, and the American flag; political figures; scientists; and weapons and airplanes.

Findings

Analysis of case one: Ben

Profile of Ben

Ben was a student in Class I. Judy described Ben as a high ability student who was an outstanding reader and writer. From my own observation, I could see that he participated in class and had an eager attitude towards learning. I observed that he enjoyed social studies and understood most of what he had learned. His answers to Judy's questions were always accurate. Judy indicated that he was capable of learning in any style. He sometimes chatted with his classmates, especially Jon (a case study student), and did different tasks (e.g., mathematics homework or reading a book for a reading class) during social studies classes. I observed that he participated in discussions and learned through class discussions and note-taking during the class. Judy related that he had a great attitude toward school, value doing well and that he scored very highly on all tests.

Ben's pre-knowledge about World War II

Ben's KWL data indicated that he knew the United States won and Germany and Japan lost World War II. His first interview indicated that he knew that the United States, Japan, Germany, England, and France were involved in the war, but he did not mention other Allied countries such as the Soviet Union, and Italy, another important Axis country. He knew about the invasion of Poland that caused World War II. In addition, he indicated the following events Germany invaded Poland such as the declaration of war on Germany by Great Britain and France. However, he did not mention the historical backgrounds about why Germany invaded Poland. Nor did he mention any historical events and battle locations in the Pacific Theater. Asked about World War II, Ben replied,

Ben: ... It [World War II] started when the Germans invaded Poland, and then the English declared war and the French declared war...

When asked about the atomic bombing, Ben characterized the atomic bombing as "really bad." However, he did not provide sufficient reasons why he thought that way.

Ben: The atomic bombing? Uh, that's something I don't remember. But, it was really bad.

He mentioned a book as one of his information sources about World War II and gave particular a title of the book, *World War II*. He also referred to the History Channel as his main information source. Asked about his information sources about the war, Ben replied,

Ben: I read books, and I watch the History Channel a little.

Interviewer: Do you remember titles of the books?

Ben: There was a book. It was titled World War II and I can't remember who it was by.

Ben's knowledge and perspective after classroom instruction

Ben's interview indicated that he was interested in the historical backgrounds of how Hitler gained power and how he started World War II. He also mentioned several countries such as the United States, Great Britain, Japan, Russia, and Germany by giving specific historical events during the war. He knew that Russia and Germany agreed to sign a secret treaty that they would not attack each other and that both Germany and

Russia would occupy half of Poland. About the Pacific Theater, he knew that the United States pressured Japan to stop the war efforts and that Japan had great success in Asia during the early point of the war. His second interview was longer than his previous one. He identified the temporal structure of the beginning of World War II in both European and Pacific Theaters and established the temporal order. Asked about World War II, Ben replied,

Ben: Um, the Japanese and Germans were involved in it. First of all Hitler, he was mad about what happened and he said they got behind him a bunch of the people. He said that people, the Germans, were better than any other race, and then what he did, he started [an] invasion of Poland and he said to the Russians that he'd give them half of Poland if they wouldn't interfere in the war, and that was a secret agreement so that when the British and France asked for help from them, they said no because of what Hitler did with the secret treaty. And then how the Japanese got into it was that the U.S. forced them to sign a trade agreement, and they got mad so they decided to get bigger and stronger building up their forces and they conquered surrounding islands...

Ben had asked Judy during her lecture about why people in Germany did not try to kill Hitler. His interview indicated that he wanted to know why people in German hoped for a new leader after World War I. When asked what he thought to be the most interesting topic about World War II, Ben indicated Hitler's anti-Semitism.

Ben: I thought the most interesting part was how Hitler put all the Jews in the concentration camps because he thought that they were part of how the Germans got hurt from the previous war.

When asked about the atomic bombing, Ben knew the secret Manhattan Project and the destruction of the USS Indianapolis, giving the number of dead, 300. He mentioned that the United States dropped the atomic bombs on Japan because Japan refused to surrender. He also revealed that he was impressed by the story of the pilot who dropped the atomic bombs on Japan and then committed suicide. Judy told the story during the day's lesson. Ben tried to recall the name of a city where the atomic bomb was dropped, but he could name only one city, not Hiroshima in which the first atomic bomb was dropped.

Ben: It was the Manhattan Project, the A-bomb. It was secret and when the carrier that was supposed to bring the titanium to them it got [messed] up by Japanese and they didn't know about it because it was so secret for two days so 300 soldiers died and they told the Japanese to surrender and they

said no, so they went and bombed it, the city. And the pilot who bombed the city committed suicide later because he did it. And then they asked them to surrender again and they didn't so they bombed. I can't remember what the city was but it started with and "N." Nagasa [ki] ... something...

Ben cited Judy's instruction as his primary source. He also indicated that he had learned about the war outside of class. Ben referred to books about the war and the History Channel as his information sources. Asked about his information sources about World War II, Ben replied,

Ben: Ms. [Judy] Williams told us some more about it, and I do read some books about it and I watch the History Channel.

Ben's knowledge and perspective after the comparative textbook analysis activity and classroom instruction about the atomic bombing

When asked about World War II, Ben clearly understood that battles were in both in Europe and in Asia. He mentioned that Japan, the United States, Germany, and Russia were involved in the war. He knew that invasion of Poland caused World War II. He also knew that Russia and Germany agreed to sign a secret treaty that Russia would never participate in the war and that both Germany and Russia would occupy half of Poland. About the Pacific, he indicated that the United States pressured Japan to stop the war efforts and that Japan had great success in Asia during the early point of the war.

Ben: It was with Japanese, Americans, Germans, and Russia. Um, First of all it started when the Germans invaded Poland and the French and the British asked Russia for help by they said no because the Germans had already did a secret agreement that if they didn't participate in the war they would get half of Poland and then over in the Pacific it started because the Japanese were mad about getting forced into a trade agreement by the U.S., and that's pretty much how it started. And, um, the atomic bomb, it was called the Manhattan Project, and it was, um, our own little island.

Since only Ben mentioned the Manhattan Project, I probed his knowledge about the project. He knew that the project was secret. However, he did not give the names of scientists who were in charge of the project. Judy taught that Albert Einstein, a famous scientist, wrote a letter to President Roosevelt, warning of the atom's potential and suggesting that the United States begin to develop an atomic bomb. However, she did not teach if Einstein directly joined the project. He revealed that he did not discover any

textual descriptions about the scientists who created the atomic bomb in his textbook and the Japanese textbook.

- Ben: Uh, it was a really secret project, it was about the atomic bomb, they were creating a small lot of them, and it was secret.
- Interviewer: Who was in charge of the Manhattan Project?
- Ben: I don't know.

Ben's explanation about the atomic bombing was more detailed than that in his previous interviews. He knew that the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He mentioned the powerful scale of the atomic bombing by giving the number of dead and the temperature of the blast at the hypocenter. Asked about the atomic bombing, Ben replied,

- Ben: They bombed, I don't know how they say, but Hiroshima or Hiroshima and Nagasaki and it caused a lot of damage and radiation. The atomic bomb would explode before it hit the ground, a thousand feet, um, roughly estimated it would kill about 350,000 people. It was so powerful that it was like over a million degrees in the center.

Ben's short essay indicated that he supported the use of the atomic bomb because the invasion of Japan might take years and cost many people's lives, and the use of the atomic bomb forced Japan to surrender.

- Ben: I think that bombing [of] Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the atomic bombs was a good idea because it would take too long for the U.S. troops to get to Japan. The Japanese said they weren't going [to] surrender and the bombing might change their minds. It saved more people from getting killed.

However, his third interview indicated that he understood both supportable and insupportable claims. While he still supported the use of the atomic bomb, he criticized the use of the atomic bombs because the atomic bombs destroyed cities and killed innocent civilians.

- Ben: Well, I kind of think it was a good idea and a bad idea. I think it was a good idea because the war could last longer and Japanese could have got more troops. It was a bad idea because they killed all the people, they were innocent and everything.

When asked if his community would be a target of current nuclear weapons, Ben described the hypothetical situation as "incredibly sad." However, he believed the possibility of future nuclear has increased because of advanced technology. However, he did not provide sufficient reasons why he named Japan, Russia, and Germany.

Ben: It could be possible if the Japanese or Russia or Germans or somebody got the places over here.

Interviewer: Why do you think so?

Ben: Well, they have faster planes, more technology, and can get over here quicker.

Ben's information sources about World War II were still books, the History Channel, and Judy.

Ben's knowledge and perspective after the oral history activity

Ben's final interview was longer than his previous three interviews. He shared new information about the European Theater, such as the German's invasion of small countries and most parts of France, Dunkirk, and the Battle of Britain. He mentioned that Hitler's attack on London was his mistake because the bombing did not bring success in the invasion of Great Britain. About the Pacific, he said that U.S. aircraft carriers patrolled when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. He tried to establish the temporal order of World War II. However, he had a difficulty explaining World War II chronologically. He mentioned Hitler's anti-Semitism and the Holocaust after he explained the Manhattan Project. Asked about World War II, Ben replied,

Ben: Over in the Atlantic, um, in Europe it started when Germany invaded Polish, the Poland, cause they thought they were better, cause that's what Adolph Hitler told them. And Adolph Hitler got Russia to sign a treaty that said if they didn't participate in the war they would get half of Poland and so they agreed and Britain and France when they asked to help from Russia. Russia said no because the secret treaty they had. Adolph Hitler began invading all the small countries around him and he invaded a certain spot like a lot of France, and he broke through the lines and pushed them all the way back to a harbor and he had the tanks going in to get them but he pulled them out and decided he would try to bomb them and that allowed them to get all their troops across the English Channel to the British Isles, I think, and they started in the Pacific when the Japanese got mad at the U.S. for forcing them into a trade agreement because their army

was stronger than theirs. They got their plans to go bomb Pearl Harbor. The U.S. picked them up on radar, but they thought it was their own scouts returning from patrol so weren't prepared for any battle or anything so that's how that happened. So the U.S. retaliated and began to attack Japan and back to Germany, Hitler began to bomb the planes, airports, no, it was like the royal something, I don't remember, and he stopped bombing them and he started bombing the cities and that was considered one of his big mistakes. The atomic bomb was built on a secret island and the ship that was supposed to be binding titanium metal to it was blown up by Japanese bombers, and they didn't know about it so three hundred soldiers died on that ship cause it was so secret, the project, that nobody knew about it till two days later. Hitler told the all the people they were better than everybody and they started blaming it on the Jews and they put them in concentration camps, but they didn't do anything so a bunch of them died.

When asked about the atomic bombing, Ben indicated that he knew additional facts. He mentioned *Little Boy*, the first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima because he had learned the name from Judy. However, he did not mention *Fat Boy*, which was another atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki. Judy did not teach this fact, and his textbook did not give the name of the bomb. Asked about the atomic bomb, Ben replied,

Ben: The atomic bomb was built on a secret island. It was called the Manhattan Project, and the first bomb was named *Little Boy* and the pilot that dropped it on the city committed suicide because after what he had done, the atomic bomb it blew up a thousand feet in the air and it let out radiation and buildings collapsed really easily and it was about millions of degrees hot in the center.

When asked what interested him most about World War II, Ben indicated the Jews in the concentration camps and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. His most interesting topics did not change from his previous interview.

Ben: I'd say how Hitler put the Jews in the concentration camps, and in the Pacific I would say it was the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

Ben's interview displayed that his information sources were Judy, books, and the History Channel. Asked about the oral history activity, he summarized the activity concisely.

Ben: That was, what kind of weapons they used, what kinds of jobs they did, how the U.S. convoy, what they ate, how it was like for them in World War II.

Ben's reflective journal indicated that he had discovered similarities and differences in both veterans' stories. He also understood that people interpret history from their own points of view. For example, Mr. Yamada said that the dropping of the atomic bombs was not necessary because Japan was ready to surrender, while Mr. Martin said it was necessary to save lives of both Americans and Japanese. He indicated a clear understanding of the sense-making of different perspectives of the atomic bombing between the two veterans.

Ben: Their answers were so different because they are different people and they have different opinions.

Ben's reflective journal and interview indicated that he understood both veterans' situations that they should fight in the war. When asked if he would fight for his country, he expressed that he was willing to fight.

Ben: I would fight to be free and represent my country during the war.

Ben's presentation

Ben had indicated that his most interesting topics about World War II were Jews in the concentration camps and the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, he chose the topic of kamikaze pilots for his presentation. He had never mentioned kamikaze pilots in his interviews. However, when Judy explained that Japanese pilots known as kamikazes, volunteered for suicide mission, he made personal comment saying that the kamikaze pilots were "crazy." Ben could not understand why these young Japanese pilots were willing to die for their country. During her lecture, Judy reminded students that Japanese people honored samurai and samurai were honored to die. Ben chose the topic for his presentation because he wanted to know more about kamikaze pilots. He drew a picture about a kamikaze pilot diving to bomb a battleship or a carrier. He explained his picture;

Ben: Kamikaze pilots were treated with great ceremony. There were plenty of kamikaze pilots to spare. They were put to work immediately when they became kamikaze pilots. On October 25, five zeros carry bombs, with four others escort located a carrier group and began to attack. All five kamikaze were successful in hitting carriers. Before a mission, the kamikaze pilots went through an ancient ceremony based on the rites of the ancient samurai. After receiving final libation, the pilot was helped by

a comrade to put the samurai headband on symbolizing courage and composure.

Analysis of case two: Cindy

Profile of Cindy

Cindy was a student in Class I. Judy described Cindy as a high or average student. Judy hesitated to choose Cindy as a case study student because she was extremely shy and quiet. She always sat in the front row, which was close to a TV monitor. I never observed that she participated actively in class discussions or asked questions in class. During the class, she always took notes or listened to Judy's lecture. However, I observed that she chatted with her classmates and always smiled during recess. Judy said that Cindy was capable of learning in various styles. She read well and did well on all tests. She cared about her grades and was well liked by her classmates. Judy also noted that Cindy had a very compliant attitude, but was not often enthusiastic. Judy shared that Cindy liked to work on projects and her salt dough maps were always the best in the class.

Cindy's pre-knowledge about World War II

When asked about World War II, Cindy did not mention any specific countries and persons since she did not know anything about the war. However, she characterized World War II as "sad." She reasoned that "most of the world was involved" and "a lot of people got killed" in the war.

Cindy: ... I don't know hardly anything about it [World War II]. It's just sad.
Most of the world was involved with it, and a lot of people got killed in it.

When asked about the atomic bombing, Cindy described the historical event as "very deadly" although she did not provide sufficient reasons why she thought that way.

Cindy: Um, all I really know about that [the atomic bombing] I haven't really heard about it a lot. It just was very deadly, and that's basically all I know about it.

Asked about her information sources about World War II, Cindy cited her main source as her classroom teacher, Judy. She also mentioned books and TV programs. However, she did not give particular titles of books and programs.

- Cindy: [My information sources about World War II are] Books, TV, and a teacher.
- Interviewer: Tell me more about books that you read.
- Cindy: [I do] Not really remember titles of books.
- Interviewer: How about TV programs?
- Cindy: I don't know.

Cindy's knowledge and perspective after classroom instruction

Although Cindy did not mention any specific countries in her first interview, her second interview indicated that she understood that Japan, the United States, and Germany were involved in the war. She knew that Japan attacked Pearl Harbor because the United States placed an embargo on natural resources to Japan. She also knew that the United States declared war on Japan and then Germany declared war on the United States. However, her explanation about World War II was still brief. Asked about World War II, Cindy replied,

Cindy: OK. Now, I know that almost the whole world was involved and the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor to tell the Americans to stop pressuring them and then Germans declared war on them afterwards.

When asked about the atomic bombing, Cindy indicated that the development of the atomic bomb was secret. However, she did not mention the name of the project, "Manhattan project." She gave the specific name of the scientist, Albert Einstein, who made the atomic bomb. She also indicated that many scientists were involved in the development of the atomic bombs. She knew that two atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, but she did not mention the names of the two cities. Asked about her information sources about World War II, she learned about World War II from Judy's instruction.

Cindy's knowledge and perspective after the comparative textbook analysis activity and classroom instruction about the atomic bombing

Cindy's explanation about World War II was still brief. She knew that the United States dropping the atomic bombs defeated Japan. She tried to recall the sequence of events at the beginning of the war. Her explanation did not indicate that she identified the temporal structure of the war.

Cindy: Um, there were two atomic bombs, and, we beat the Japanese and, um,

Germany also declared war on us and we declared it break like two days later and, um, that's...

When asked about her information sources about the war, she indicated that she had watched a program related to the war. However, she did not mention details about the program. Asked about her information sources about the war, Cindy replied,

- Cindy: Ms. [Judy] Williams told us, and we read about it, and I got some from TV last night.
Interviewer: What kind of TV program?
Cindy: Um, Discovery Channel.
Interviewer: Do you remember the title of the program?
Cindy: No, I don't remember the title.
Interviewer: Tell me more about the program?
Cindy: Um, well, let's see, some about the bombings and, um, about why we bombed them, and stuff like that.

When asked about the atomic bombing, Cindy characterized the atomic bombing as "very dangerous" and "really bad." Judy also taught that the blast destroyed buildings and took the lives over 350,000 people.

- Cindy: The atomic bombing, well, it was very dangerous, and in the center it was like 30 million degrees Celsius, and it was very bad. Um, (pause) a bunch of people were killed by it. Like over a mile a way there was destruction and it was really bad.

Cindy's short essay indicated that she believed the United States should have dropped only one atomic bomb on Japan. She gave the following three reasons;

- Cindy: I believe that one should have been dropped, but not on land, but around the ocean. (1) That way made nobody get killed and the Japanese would surrender because they saw what we could do to them if they didn't surrender. (2) Another reason is because we might not have won and we could be under the control of the Japanese now. (3) My very last reason is so that there might not have been such a big interruption in Japan.

Cindy's interview was almost the same as her short essay. She questioned why the United States dropped another atomic bomb on Japan.

- Cindy: Well, I kind of support it, and then I don't really. I don't think we should drop two, I think, we should have dropped one. And, that's basically it.

Interviewer: Why do you think so?

Cindy: Um, because if you drop two there's more damage for them to handle with, and it was like really devastating, and no one should do that to another culture.

When asked if her community would be a target of current nuclear weapons, Cindy did not believe that her community would be a target. She probably recalled Judy's comment in the class that the community would not be a target because it was not an important industrial area.

Cindy: Um, I would probably feel that it wasn't really fair because if what our county hadn't really done anything, it was like another state or city in this place and, I don't know. It would probably be really devastating.

Cindy's knowledge and perspective after the oral history activity

Cindy's last interview was still short. She indicated that the United States, Germany, and Japan were involved in the war. She mentioned Hitler, but she did not explain details about him. She knew that the United States dropped atomic bombs on two Japanese cities: Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, her interview did not indicate that she provide sufficient information about the war.

Cindy: The U.S. and Germany fought and we bombed Japan and, um, um, Hitler was one of the main reasons the war started and I don't know... All right. We bombed Hiroshima and um, Nagasa[ki]... or something like that... •

When asked about the atomic bombing, Cindy described the atomic bombing as "very dangerous." She learned that the radiation from the atomic bombs was so great that it killed many people.

Cindy: The atomic bombing? Um, it was same kind of nuclear weapon that we used. It was very dangerous and it caused some radiation and it killed a bunch of people.

When asked what she thought to be the most interesting topic about World War II, Cindy indicated the atomic bombing because it was "really cool." However, she did not provide sufficient information why she characterized the atomic bombing as "really cool."

Cindy: I just think it's really cool, the way they invested and how they made it like time, when they exploded it and stuff. That's why I like it.

When asked about her interpretation of the atomic bombing, Cindy supported the use of the atomic bomb and agreed with Mr. Martin's comment that Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. In her reflective journal, Cindy wrote,

I agree with Mr. Martin because I believe they [the Japanese] were trying taking over, starting the war against the United States.

Cindy's information sources were Judy, her textbook, and TV programs. She understood different perspectives through the oral history activity because she realized people interpret history from their own points of views. She also learned first hand that the story of history was told from different perspectives and different experiences. Asked about the oral history activity, Cindy replied,

Cindy: [They] were very different. One of them thought that it was good that we bombed and the other one thought it was bad because Japan was gonna surrender a few days later. They had some really good stories about how they came to be in the war and how they felt about it.

When asked what she had discovered through the comparative textbook analysis, Cindy found different descriptions about the atomic bombing in Japanese and American textbooks. She was surprised when she found in the Japanese textbook the number of people who died from the bombing. However, she noticed that the number of dead was not found in the U.S. textbook.

Cindy: It was very different. The Japanese textbooks explained more about the atomic bombing and how many people were killed. The U.S. just had one sentence about it. The Japanese textbook had a lot of information about World War II and the U.S. It had some, but not as much as the Japanese.

Cindy's presentation

Cindy chose the topic of the Holocaust for her final presentation, although he had indicated that she was interested in the atomic bombing. She drew one Jewish boy wearing a white cap and a red and green shirt. She emphasized his unnatural short hair. She drew a number, "3-3692," on his left arm. She also drew barbed wire fences behind him. On the upper left side, Cindy drew one B-29 bomber dropping a bomb. She explained her drawing,

Nazi[s] hated Jews because they were different and the Germans were losing war and blamed it on Jews. Nazi[s] had Jews cut hair because of [the] thought of lice. Many Jews were killed.

Analysis of case three: Tom

Profile of Tom

Tom, a student in Class II, always sat next to Sherry, one of the case study students. Judy described Tom as an average student in terms of academic ability, but an above average student in terms of enthusiasm and attitude. Judy also explained that he was very positive in his approach to learning and exhibited a constant desire to learn more. Tom was interested in learning about World War II. Judy described that he was a kind person who often helped classmates when they were having trouble with an activity or assignment. I observed that he participated actively in class discussion, and enjoyed group activities.

Tom's pre-knowledge about World War II

Tom's KWL data indicated that Germany, Japan, and the United States were involved in World War II. His interview indicated that Hitler persecuted the Jews, Hitler tried to take over Europe, and Hitler fought with Japan. He knew that Hitler was an important political figure during the war. He remembered a bit about the persecution of Jews from a previous class. Asked about World War II, Tom replied,

Tom: Well, I know that Hitler told everyone in Germany that the Jews stabbed him in the back and he wanted to take over Europe, and um, he got Japan to do that with him...

Tom mentioned Pearl Harbor when he was asked about World War II. He knew that Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor caused World War II in the Pacific. He said that U.S. aircraft carriers patrolled when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

Tom: ... I heard that they [Japan] bombed World War. I mean Pearl Harbor, and, that we had, I think, 2 or 3 aircraft carriers out that, they didn't know about, and um, that's pretty much it...

When asked about the atomic bombing, Tom did not know anything about the historical event, and he seemed not to understand even the meaning of the term "atomic bombing."

Asked about his information sources about World War II, Tom cited his main source as his classroom teacher, Judy. He remembered that he had learned about World War II from in an earlier unit. He also mentioned that his textbook was his information source about the war.

- Tom: ... I got it [World War II] from 5th and 6th grades. Ms. [Judy] Williams taught me, and that's how I got my source or information.
- Interviewer: Have you read books or magazines about the war?
- Tom: Um, well, just in my textbook really. That's all, where I got my information.

Tom's knowledge and perspective after classroom instruction

Tom knew that Japan and the United States fought against each other. However, unlike Ben, he did not indicate any actions by such other countries in the European Theater such as Germany, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. His interview indicated that he most recently had gained information about topics such as Pearl Harbor, America freezing Japanese assets, and the large scale of U.S. military force through Judy's lecture. However, in his second interviews, he focused only on the day's lesson. Asked about World War II, Tom replied,

- Tom: Um, well today we learned about Japan and how they tried to get stronger and take over other countries to look good to America and how America ended up freezing their money and they bombed Pearl Harbor, and we had three aircraft carriers and it ended up turning into a hundred, something like 5 times Japan's force, I think.

Tom's interview about the atomic bombing indicated that he learned that Hitler and the United States competed to create a new weapon. However, he did not mention any other topics about the atomic bombing, such as President Truman's decision to drop the atomic bombs, the scale of the atomic bomb, and two Japanese cities where the atomic bombs were dropped. Asked about the atomic bomb, Tom replied,

- Tom: Well, I know that when you drop it, it explodes and they used a lot of those. And, there was a bomb they were building. I think it was Hitler and the U.S. were racing to build the atom bomb to destroy somebody around that area.

Tom referred to the media as an information source. He identified his most interesting topic about World War II, Midway. In addition to Judy's lecture when she identified Midway as the turning point in the Pacific Theater, he also recalled that he had learned about Midway outside of class, when he and his father had watched an old movie about Midway together.

- Tom: Um, the most interesting topic, I think would be, um, I think the Midway was pretty cool and how we dropped in them and fought against Japan and all the planes going around the ship ... It's very cool.
- Interviewer: Have you ever read any books about Midway?
- Tom: No. I've seen a movie on it though.
- Interviewer: What kind of movie?
- Tom: I forgot what it was called, it was pretty old, black and white. Me and my dad saw it.

Asked about how Tom shared stories and information about World War II with his family, he responded,

- Tom: Well, they [his parents and grandparents] never really told me anything, but I'd bring home a lot of tidbits of information and tell them and stuff.

Tom's knowledge and perspective after the comparative textbook analysis activity and classroom instruction about the atomic bombing

Tom's explanation about World War II was still brief. However, he shared new ideas that half of the Jews in Europe were killed and that Pearl Harbor and Midway were important events in the Pacific Theater. He restated this perceptions of the importance of Pearl Harbor and Midway.

- Tom: Well, um, Japan and Germany got into it. They thought they could take over the world and we ended up having to get in there and fight and many of, half of the Jews in Europe killed and, um, um, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, which was one of the main things. And, Midway was a big thing. And, that's....

When asked about the atomic bombing, Tom, like Ben, revealed that he was impressed by the story of the pilot who dropped the atomic bombs on Japan and then committed suicide. He also learned from Judy's lecture that the radiation from those bombs was so great that its effects are still causing suffering to the victims even today. He used terms of "vaporize" and "radiation" to explain about the atomic bombing.

Tom: Um, well, I know a lot more now. A pilot went over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, is that it, and he bombed them and many people got vaporized and some are still suffering from radiation today and um, the pilot who ended up bombing, he didn't know and ended up committing suicide afterwards.

His short essay and interview indicated that he did not support the use of the atomic bomb because many innocent people were killed. He used vocabulary such as "sick," "horrible," "a waste of lives," and "harsh" to talk about his perspective. Asked about his interpretation about the atomic bombing, Tom replied in his short essay.

Tom: I would not support the atomic bombing. I think it is a sick way to kill. Some people were just totally vaporized. Others are still suffering from it today. It causes many [diseases] and is a horrible thing to do.

Tom replied in his interviews,

Tom: Um, I think we should not support it because, I mean, it's just a waste of lives, I mean, all those innocent civilians got killed in that and they're still suffering from that today and so, I think that it's wrong and that it's a harsh way to kill some people.

When asked if his community would be a target of current nuclear weapons, he described intensely scared feelings. His interview indicated that he knew that the current nuclear weapons are more powerful than the Hiroshima-scaled atomic bombs.

Tom: Um, I'd be pretty scared because you know, they're a lot larger today, you know the exploration would be a lot larger today, and so, it would be pretty scary, 'cause we'd get like vaporized.

His information sources grew although his main information source was still Judy.

Interviewer: Did you read books or watch TV programs related to the war?

Tom: Well, sometimes, my grandfather loves the History Channel and I'd watch a little bit on air, and textbooks and atlases and stuff, kinds, um, from information from.

Tom's knowledge and perspective after the oral history activity

His last interview indicated that he summarized World War II concisely with new information such as Germany taking over Poland and the Bataan Death March. He knew

that Germany's invasion of Poland caused World War II and that the Bataan Death March was an emotional event for the United States. His explanation was still short; however, he could chronologically tell about both the European Theater and the Pacific Theater in World War II. Asked about World War II, Tom replied,

Tom: Well, I know that the Germans fought it, got involved and took over Poland and the Japanese got involved and they bombed Pearl Harbor and that was a big thing and the death march was another really big thing for us and we ended up winning it against Germany and Japan. That's just the basic stuff.

Asked about the atomic bombing, he indicated more information about the atomic bombing than he had told about. With the use of the new word, "hypocenter," he expressed the power of the atomic bombs. He also said that people still suffer from cancer and other diseases because of the effects of radiation. He knew that the United States bombed two Japanese cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He remembered the story of a pilot who dropped the atomic bombs on Japan and then committed suicide.

Tom: Well, I know it was a lot more powerful than they intended and thought it would be and it vaporized people in the hypocenter and people are still suffering from it today, from radiation, like cancer and all the other different diseases and [Nagasaki] and no, Hiroshima, is that it? Hiroshima and Nagasaki got bombed and the pilot that bombed them took suicide later...

When asked what he thought to be the most interesting topic about World War II, Tom indicated the atomic bombing. His opinion changed from Midway to the atomic bombing thorough learning more about the war. He became more interested in the atomic bomb after he learned about it in class. He used Judy's terms, not the language of the textbook, to describe the effects of the atomic bomb.

Tom: Um, most interesting thing... I thought it was pretty interesting how the atomic bomb just vaporized people and they don't really know how many people were killed. I just thought that was interesting to learn about.

Since Tom mentioned the atomic bombing as his most interesting topic, I asked him why the United States dropped the atomic bombs on Japan. He reasoned that the United States dropped the atomic bombs partially because of their understanding about the

Japanese, "the samurai spirit." He remembered Judy's instruction about Japan during the war, during which he learned about Japan's unique geographical, historical, and cultural characteristics. She had taught that Japan is comprised of thousands of islands and had maintained its isolation and dislike of foreigners for centuries. After Japan was forced to sign the trade agreement with foreign countries, Japan decided to be a powerful country. She also told that Japanese people honored samurai and that samurai were honored to die and never surrendered. When Judy explained the traditional characteristics of Japan, she used the term "*harakiri*" to indicate that samurai chose to commit suicide rather than surrender. Asked about the reasons why the United States dropped the atomic bombs, Tom replied,

Tom: Well, we thought that the Japanese would not surrender and we thought because of the background of the [samurai], yeah, samurai and that never give up was one of their things... fight to your death, and so we, I guess, we thought they're never gonna surrender. Japanese are gonna die one way so, why don't we just save these lives, let's just go ahead and wipe out these and save the other half, so, I think that's why we bombed them.

Tom's interview confirmed that his main information sources were Judy and materials used in a classroom. Tom's interview also showed that he learned first hand that the story of history is told from different perspectives and different experiences. Asked about the oral history activity, Tom replied,

Tom: Um, I learned that a lot of their answers were similar and a lot of their answers were different and, um, the American dude, they were both like, um, (pause), descriptive about what they were saying, and um, they were very involved with their story and, um, there you go.

His reflective writing indicated some confusion and unhappy feelings about Mr. Yamada's comment about Pearl Harbor. However, he identified positively with Mr. Yamada because as a Japanese veteran and citizen, Mr. Yamada knew more about the reasons why Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. His reflection indicated that he grasped a "new" perspective.

Tom: I had a predictable shock [to hear Mr. Yamada say he was proud and happy to hear that Pearl Harbor had been bombed]. What I mean is that I knew he was going to say what he said, yet I was

still shocked at what he said to us... I agree with Mr. Yamada [who said Japan bombed Pearl Harbor because of the U.S. embargoes of oil and steel] because Mr. Martin [who thought Japan bombed Pearl Harbor because they were trying to take over the world with Hitler] wouldn't know for sure why they bombed us, but Mr. Yamada would because he lived in Japan.

Tom's interview indicated that he appreciated people who fought for their country. In addition, he appreciated the Japanese soldiers' bravery. Asked about soldiers, who fought for their countries, Tom replied,

Tom: That they were brave and um, they were well trained, and um, they had to be pretty smart to be like a general or somebody and get into this area, so that is what I think about them.

Interviewer: How do you think about the Japanese soldiers...

Tom: I think they had to be a little bit more brave because they were a lot smaller than the U.S. and, um, fighting for a smaller country, they had to be really brave to do that.

Tom understood both veterans' situations, that they felt they should fight in the war. He even embraced the sense of duty.

Tom: I would think that it would be my duty because if I'm going to live here I am going to have to defend it.

Tom's presentation

As he had indicated in his interviews, Tom chose the topic he was interested in, the atomic bomb, for his presentation. Unlike other classmates who chose one topic, Tom also chose the USS Indianapolis along with the atomic bomb. He drew the atomic bomb on the left side and the USS Indianapolis in the right side. His two pictures represent his perspective that World War II caused many victims and tragedies in both the United States and Japan. He drew two pictures related to the atomic bomb: the black atomic blast and the mushroom cloud. Tom explained his picture about the atomic bomb;

Tom: The atomic bomb was one of the most powerful bombs ever made. When the *Enola Gay* dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it killed hundreds of thousands people. We can only estimate how people were killed by the blast because whole families were killed, buildings were destroyed, and many were vaporized. The blast was a fatal destination.

Tom drew two pictures about the USS Indianapolis: before and after the battle ship sunk. The secrecy of its mission intrigued Tom because he wrote that "No one knew it [the Indianapolis] was missing for three years" and that "It was such a secret mission." Tom explained the USS Indianapolis.

Tom: The USS Indianapolis was coming back from an island called "Titian" and had just dropped off cargo there. It was coming back when a German submarine shot a torpedo at the bottom of the ship. Since the ship had a lot of explosives and ammunition on it, it made a huge explosion killing many. The ship sunk in 18 minutes. Eight hundred people survived the sinking. But, since the ship sunk in shark infested waters, five hundred people were eaten.

Discussion

Prior to the unit of instruction about World War II, the middle school students had given little thought about the topics of perspective-taking or World War II. Ben and Tom focused only on superficial factual information. Students' knowledge and perspectives about World War II expanded after Judy's classroom instruction. Ben identified the temporal structure of the beginning of the war in the Europe and Pacific Theaters and established the temporal order, giving specific historical events. Cindy also mentioned the sequence of events at the beginning of the war in Europe and Asia. Tom revealed information about Japan during the war that he had most recently gained through Judy's lecture. Their knowledge about the atomic bombing increased through Judy's lecture. Ben mentioned various topics including the secret Manhattan project, the destruction of the USS Indianapolis, and the story of the pilot who dropped the atomic bombs on Japan and then committed suicide. He revealed his perspective of the atomic bombing. He supported the use of the atomic bomb because Japan refused to surrender. While their knowledge had increased, Cindy and Tom mentioned only factual information. They did not indicate a multi-perspective understanding.

After the comparative textbook analysis activity and Judy's instruction about the atomic bombing, three students' knowledge and perspectives advanced. Through the comparative textbook analysis, they found that the treatment of the atomic bombing in American and Japanese textbooks differed greatly, such as in their reporting of America's motives and objectives in using the bomb and the aftermath of the atomic bombing.

Through Judy's instruction, the students learned diverse interpretations and the differences between supportable and insupportable claims. As they learned more about the atomic bombing, they became more interested in the event and talked about their perspectives. Ben supported the use of the atomic bomb because the invasion of Japan might take years and cost many people's lives and the use of the atomic bomb forced Japan to surrender.

All students' knowledge about World War II dramatically advanced after the oral history activity. As expected, all students' interviews were longer than their previous interviews. They shared new information and additional facts about the European Theater, the Pacific Theater, and the atomic bombing. Through the oral history activity, they discovered similarities and differences between the veterans' stories. They understood that people interpret history from their own points of view. They indicated that they appreciated the people who fought in the war although they had different perspectives. For example, Tom showed respect not only for American veterans but also for Japanese veterans who fought for their countries. All three students believed that they would be willing to fight for their country if the United States would be involved a war.

These three students chose the topic in which they were most interested for their final presentations. Judy's instruction, various activities, and the students' knowledge and perspectives about the topics probably contributed to their choices of the topics. For example, Ben chose the topic of kamikaze pilots because Judy had not provided enough information to answer his burning questions about why the kamikaze pilots were willing to die for their country.

Each student indicated that various teaching methods influenced their knowledge and perspectives about World War II. Other factors outside of class such as movies and the History Channel also influenced students' knowledge and perspective. However, they indicated that their knowledge and perspectives were most strongly influenced by Judy's instruction. She played an important role in helping students advance their knowledge and construct their perspectives. For example, Tom explained that a reason why the United States dropped the atomic bombs was that the United States thought the Japanese, who had samurai backgrounds, would never surrender. His viewpoint was clearly influenced by Judy's lecture because she taught that the Japanese traditional spirit was

one reason why the U.S. dropped the atomic bombs on Japan, and Tom recalled this viewpoint. This view was not found in either country's textbook and was not shared by either veteran. However, it should be noted that this view may include some inaccurate information and misunderstanding about Japanese people. Although I examined different interpretations of the atomic bombing, I was not able to find evidence supporting Judy's view. Thus, this case indicates that students may have continued to misunderstand historical actions if teachers had taught inaccurate information.

This study was significant to better understand students' historical understanding, historical inquiry, perspective-taking, and cross-cultural understanding between Japan and the United States. However, this study included several limitations. First, the research site was one public middle school in rural Georgia with a small number of students drawn largely from a working class neighborhood. Thus, an urban site with different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds should also be examined. Second, although my case study students mirrored diversity, more diverse students should be examined. Third, I worked with only one social studies teacher in this study. Data collected from various teachers would be helpful to gain deeper insights. Finally, I gathered data during a brief unit of instruction about World War II. Therefore, more time to collect additional data would be beneficial.

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